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Dedicated with love
to my sister
MRS. HELEN MATTOCKS SPENCER
who suggested and makes
feasible this little
volume.

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BY
BREWER MATTOCKS

ARRANGEMENT AND DESIGN BY
NORTON MATTOCKS

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Our Red Letter Days

Being a Collection of
Verse Selected from
the Writings of

1182
355

BREWER MATTOCKS

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JANUARY, GARNET, Constancy.

1— The two-faced Janus steadfast waits,
God of the Ways, beside the gates
Of Past and Future; in whose hands
He holds the Days. The garnet stands
For January, Constancy,
To retrospectively foresee.

2— The future of a life is like to be
As was its Past, and Present carried out.
And who would read his future need but cast
His gaze behind and look upon his past.

Horoscoping the Future.

3— As some fixed headland bears a beacon light
To guide, or cheer some storm-tossed mariner
Into his harbor with all dangers passed,
So stands good Purpose, constant and steadfast!

Fixed purpose.

4— Tho Hell, men say, is paved with Good Intent,
On which lost Souls must here forever tread;
'Tis no less true that Heaven's azure dome
Is starred with Right Resolves all hither come.

Good resolutions.

5— I know but one Evangel that will lift
The drooping hearts of all these sons of men
To bring them to repentance, and new life,
One sweet Evangel which is known as Help.

Songs of Help.

6— A good impulse seemed to lift me,
Such as comes with lifting wings
To upbear one, for the moment,
Above Self, and selfish things.

My good Angel.

7— Doubt may be honest, as God's truth is true,
Belief, unreasoning, may all faith undo!

Honest Doubt.

Wee Pilgrim, at the threshold of Life's door,
Why dids't thou enter not, but timidly
8— Pass on as if there was no room for thee?
There was both room, and welcome, and a store
Beyond thy needs, with full hearts running o'er
Of love, which looked-for-ones alone may claim!

Stillborn.

Occasion comes to all who ready wait.
9— The gods will set a target for each shaft;
And happy he, this brought within his view,
With steadfast aim to put the arrow true.

Advantaging occasion.

Yet, if our lives go with fixed, good intent
10— We may with hope much coming good expect.
An oak within the acorn lies concealed,
Altho each nut does not its oak tree yield!

The worth of good intent.

When an Age doth fall in labor
11— With a Principle, the Earth
With all Nature, seem convulsed, so great
Are its throes and pangs of birth!

The closing of the Gates of War.

Once break the routine of Morality
12— And it has all but ceased to be a force.
Fixed Habit, more than Motive or Intent,
Will furnish living its best nutriment.

A fixed moral habit.

Nothing dies, and nothing can die,
13— Till in some form it doth give,
From itself, or resolution,
Life for other lives to live.

Life at sixty.

14— The peals of Peace must first be rung
Upon the chimes of Home!

The return of the trophies.

"Give me the good intentions of the Day
15— —I mean intentions had in all good faith—
Full half the ills of Life I will engage
To cure." Once said Autoritas, the Sage.

The Worth of Good Intent.

Life's only constant happy man is he
16— Who lives his love, to love Life as he lives;
Nor shirks its shove, or seeks the World's caress;
Who hugs less, than imparts his happiness.

Life's Happy Man.

Child-sight is the clearest, therefore,
17— Should we not expect from Youth
Clearer views, more Right Perspective,
Truer notions of the Truth?

Child-sightedness.

An hundred men may think, where one talks well;
18— An hundred may speak well, where one speaks wise;
An hundred wise men, yet scarce one can find
Exact, and fit expression for his mind!

Adequate Expression.

A man who sees too much, sees little right,
19— While who sees less than truth sees mostly wrong.
A man who sees exactly of his Kind
Has much less need of men to change his mind.

The Perversion of a Sense.

"Why do the eyes of Age grow dim?" Youth asked
20— An old man, who at once replied, "So that
He cannot see the little things which vex,
And Life, unnecessarily, perplex!"

Why Age has Dimmed Eyes.

Who borrows Trouble pays usurious rates;
21— And more like than not, the principal
May not be called, the interest to accrue
May tenfold equal all the obligation due.

Borrowing Trouble.

22— "Man's life is but a span! Aye, if be so
My heart has ever questioned what
Would the pleasures of the next world be
If nothing of this one remained of me?"
The Shepherd's Wish for Immortality.

23— Tomorrow is the surest day in Life!
One may pass by Today, or Yesterday,
With all its happenings of time and place,
But his Tomorrows, Man must surely face!
Man's Future he must Face.

24— What is so secret as a Human Life!
How curiously its tenement is built
With view to hide all inner passages;
Trap-floors, blind stairways, and wainscoted-doors.
The Soap-Baron's secret.

25— Vibration is a force omnipotent
The World to hold in place, and to destroy;
It is not Matter, lacking weight and size,
Yet, 'tis the biggest Power below the Skies!
Omnipotent Vibration.

26— "It was us on the one side, an' him on that;
But, there stood the fence between
Which he wouldn't climb over. Him! Truckle or stoop?
Why, he wouldn't so much as lean!"
Nothing but a Man of God!

27— The nearest that Man can approach
To God's prerogative
Is, when a Father to his Son
Says, "Fully I forgive!"
The Divine Fatherhood in Man.

28— And so for years it stood a house
Which best fulfilled the purpose of a house,
To stand the best for what a house was built,
Than all the houses in its neighborhood!
Edifying Character.

What shall the New Year bring to you?
The blessings of the going Year,
And of the coming, give to you
29— Rich gifts of loving, helpful Cheer.
What shall the New Year say to you?
"I love you, and I wish you well!
May Peace, and Joy and Happiness
In rightful living with you dwell."

What shall the New Year show to you?
Approval of the past Year; too,
Strong vantage-ground whereon Life may
Appear from larger point of view.
30— What may the New Year do to you?
Enlarge your outlook, to inspire
Endeavor to a steadfast aim
Unto the End of living higher.

What shall the New Year be to you?
A Benediction; and, the blest
Assurance, that while God is Good,
31— Life has no better, all is best!
So shall the New Year bring to you,
And say, and show, and do, and be
As He would have it; spent in Hope,
And lived, thro Faith, with Charity.

FEBRUARY, AMETHYST, Sincerity.

1— February wakens life. The Month
Of Expiation, and Self-Sacrifice;
Bird-mating, and love-making, When New Life
Emerging, swings the gates of Paradise,
Becrowned with amethyst, in whom we see
Both grace, and face of sweet Sincerity.

2— He goes not wholly wrong who is sincere;
Tho lack of signboards, while crossroads mislead
By indirection, that one's footsteps stray,
Sincerity will yet show him the way.

Following Sincerity.

3— Hers was a life of Loving Kindness which
In every act of living did appear;
A life of sweet Self-Sacrifice, withal,
And utterly sincere!

An Helpful Remembrance.

4— Size, with Truth, is not a factor,
Small or great. Truth must be true;
These great Waters are no truer
Than the bluebell's drop of dew!

Baptism River.

5— Such as a Soul would be, so is its God.
One asked a slave, "Why place your gods so high?"
"That they look down benignently to greet
My worship, as I rise to kiss their feet!"

Each Makes his Own Gods.

6— Most men have fear of some one righteous man,
While each good man inspires a deal of awe.
Tho some fear Evil, more do fear the Good,
Were moral fears but rightly understood.

Fear Inspired by Virtue.

7— How, in its living, can the Ideal best
Be both upheld, exemplified, expressed?

The Old Question of Ideals.

Sincere endeavor is a cause half-won;
8— And tho it fails to bring its wished for goal,
Nor breaks one's fall, or lifts him from the ground,
It does salve smarting to soon heal the wound.

Sincere Endeavor.

"He made no woman blush, no youth to err,
9— No weak one stumble, and no true Knight frown.
He broke his life for others whom he lent,
Asked little for himself, and lived content."

The King's voice.

All great men have no ancestors:
The gods build on a plan
10— Entirely new when they put up
The framework of big men!

The Return of the Trophies.

"Act in sincerity, and with
Great loving-kindness, Dear,
11— For an happy married life must be
Entirely sincere!"

The Wifely Way.

Those good words I read yesterday
May be in Heaven felt,
12— Live with Eternity, nor all
Perdition's fires can melt!

Recasting Type-plates.

A man in selfish pride threw down,
But to trample on a crown
Set about with gems of priceless worth;
13— Yet to find out, to his cost,
All too late, what he had lost
When he strove to pick the jewels from the earth!

The Wife.

"Who sings to an Heart," said a Voice profound,
14— "Must take his stand on Life's higher Ground!"

The Voice.

Continuous endeavor makes
15— A life, tho short or long, completed.
He who falls fighting on Life's field
May hold his warfare not defeated.

What Constitutes Completion.

In the cold grey days of Lent
Biting, bitter winds are sent
By the Master, with intent, Lenten Leaf,
16— To replace you with a shoot,
Bearing buds, and blossoms, fruit;
For thy loss what substitute! Lenten Leaf.

Lenten Leaves.

Good to be better, but best to be good,
For then there is less need for betterment.
17— The being good, e'en in a less degree,
Is better than the largest best, to-be!

Being, Better Than to-be.

Who, like a sneak, peers through its window blinds
Or listens at the keyhole of his Soul,
18— (To call this moral introspection) will
Find but a darkened room where all is still!

Fingering Faults.

Materialities all fail
To satisfy the Soul's desires
19— For something tangible; all such
Fail to respond to Life's nice sense of touch.

Life's Moral Tact.

It is far easier to talk, than speak the truth,
While who would scorn to tell them, may talk lies.
20— And, too, far easier to appear
With great Sincerity, than be sincere!

A False Life may tell the Truth.

Wanton perversion of one's senses is,
21— Against himself, the sin unpardonable!

Life's Unpardonable Sin.

The greatness of a State lies in the man
Who will walk upright, and dares walk alone;
22— Who would stand steadfast, and believes he can;
Who holds the Peoples' good before his own.
When such men die their memories and bones
For States to come, make best foundation stones.

National Greatness.

A mother once was proffered choice between
Good Fortune, with all favor at command,
Or sweet Sincerity with empty hand.
23— She chose Good Fortune, all so mother-like;
When, at the Font, where now the mother stood,
"Sincerity!" outcried her Motherhood.

A mother's choice.

A Roman Censor who had great repute
Advising parents for their childrens' good
24— Held, proper training of its Youth did more
To raise the State, than all the arms it bore.

Breeding a Boy.

Encourage each lad's competition with
His fellows, to obtain the mastery
25— In less, as well as larger things: for strife
In competition, is the wine of Life.

Striving for Life's Masteries.

Who loaded, lifts; who knows, but is unknown,
26— Save in his work, which he fears not to own!

Human Helpfulness.

Who fain would seek to verify each truth,
Or prove Devotion, or true Friendship test,
27— To Motive weigh, may find out in the end
He loses hundreds, where he gains one friend!

How Friendship may be Lost.

28— True, yet no good can be purchased
Without paying what it cost!

Baptism River.

29— There is one extra day in each man's life.
One day, above all others, that he may,
For one day lacking, in some part atone;
Thrice happy he to whom this day is known!

Life's Extra Day.

MARCH, BLOODSTONE, True Firmness.

Mad March blusters in with blowing,
When red tulips may be seen,
1— Like its gem, the Bloodstone, showing
Sanguine drops on ground of green.
Month of Mars, the war-god, who
Stands for what is firm, and true.

Life's firmament may have full many stars
To hitch Man's wagons of Ambition, and,
There should be stars of Promise, but there must
2— Be one fixed star, on which to tie his Trust!

Life's fixed star.

3— A truth, ill put, is halved of its full force,
While truth, well uttered, is a truth twice told.

Effective Truth.

Subject begot, yet born to Sovereignty
On natal day of all our presidents;
Who, subject to the service of the State, obey
4— Its servants only, with Imperial sway.
Our Father, and our Family-tree-trunk, and,
Who firmly rooted as a tree, did stand!

(Grandfather once said: I was begotten an English subject, but was born an American citizen. The Constitution was adopted in 1777.)

JOHN MATTOCKS.

"The courage of Conviction may speak low,
The courage of Convention must cry out;
5— The courage of Conviction may bide home,
The courage of Convention must face Rome!"

Autoritas the Sage.

Strong Personality precedes most good
6— To force a following. Self-Assertion gives
Endeavor energy, when used aright,
But, if worked wrongly, will work it despite.

The Force of Personality.

7— A Fool's conviction is his stumbling-stone,
A Wise man's is the rock on which he stands.

A Fool's Convictions.

All things mean something, each event has cause;
8— The Weather's not as fickle as it seems.
Each wind would give an answer if it could,
Each Mood might give a reason if it would!

The Matter of Moods.

The thorn-circled flower seems the sweetest!
Our fears are the thorns of the hour,
9— The sweetest of all to the Parent,
That rare crowning hour of the Day
Around which the Sleep Angel hovers,
To bear us, with our children away.

The Parent's Hour.

For, be it understood,
10— To hold our Country to her place
Needs the largest Womanhood!

The closing of the Gates of War.

Firm moral fibre does it often take
11— To rise, and hold, that two and two make four;
Then, with face fixed, and back against the wall,
To dare maintain it tho the Heavens fall!

Recognizing Facts.

The force of arms lies less in might,
12— Or in the temper of the blade;
More, in the impulse of the Heart
The moment when the thrust is made!

Heart-giving Impulse.

"Less-walls, or towers, with well cut phrase,
Or, tabulated fact
13— Which guards the Marches of a State,
More, by whom her walls are backed!"

Manlius Torquatus.

Man, made in God's image, He fashioned perfection,
14— Nor stamps His own face, there to add superscription,
To that which is base!

The Organist of St. Marks.

"But, in the blast
15— You may not hear!" "I holds her fast
By orders that he gave me last,
And by them turns the wheel, the wheel!"

The Ship of Life.

"The grizzled man was rough,
16— But, in his actions firmly true. I've seen
Him roundly curse base cowardice,
Then softly read the prayers for dying braves!"

Our Colonel.

17— If you have a word, Young Man, don't delay it,
Some truth which lies next your heart, bravely say it!

The Rights of Youth.

Life's obstacles to doing, bravely met,
Tho first they hinder, at the last must help
18— One to arrive at what is best in life,
Which ever comes but by the way of strife.

Helpful obstacles.

Now, whenever cast down, and discouraged,
(May be with the burning smart
19— Of a cruel word, while welding
An Aim to Endeavor) I turn
To that Smith who rather than lose a weld
Would suffer the smart of the burn!

Don't Lose a Weld for a Burn.

* * * * * * Is defeat
The measure of Endeavor? Can but they
Who wear Life's laurels only claim the day?
20— Think you the Master held the sheaf of wheat
Completer than the lily at His feet
Which nodded greeting as He passed that way?

A young life's measure.

21— There is no honest effort comes to nought,
Or firm Resolve without good left behind!

Good Purpose Always Effective.

Full half true Joy and Happiness in Life
22— Is that sweet incense which to Heaven ascends
From votive offerings of spice, and oil, and wine
Of Self-Denials, which makes Motherhood Divine.

True Motherhood.

"Our Mother!"

Like the honeysuckle's drip,
23— Never fell from human lip
Sweeter words, or yet another
With so sweet a sound as Mother.

Life's sweetest word.

Where across shone a sheen of fields Emerald green,
When, I saw a fair Being in white,
24— With both arms outstretched, hover down from above,
Where she nestled her Child, like a sweet mother-dove,
Who had slipped from great Vanity Fair!

My vision of Life.

25— Teach me, will you, lesson brief
From your falling, Lenten Leaf!

Lenten Leaves.

"Lenten leaves are dry and sear,
Sad memorials of a Year,
26— And of Times departed.
Lenten thoughts are sad and drear,
Lenten memories make us fear
We are empty-hearted!"

Lenten Leaves.

Life, at best, is always natural
27— To a Reason self-possessed
Tho to follow Natural Impulse,
Without Reason, is not best.

Baptism River

28— Restrictions limit less than they enlarge,
To Force subserve wherein they do restrict.

Its restrictions deepen Life

"I have a firm conviction"—whispered one,
29— "Then out with it! ten paces from our throne,
That while we hear it, we may see the face
Of your Conviction!" roared the King of Thrace.

The courage of Convention.

He cut his finger, while in vain he tried
To bring forth music striking willow wood,
30— Meanwhile, he scolded, stormed, and said, "I'd make
A man of you if I but had good stuff!"
The lad replied, while scratching his sore toe,
"Yet, with good stuff you can't make whistles blow!"

The irascible Poet.

Altho one's life be very large,
31— And for all wants and wishes ample,
Right living it is hard without
The inspiration of Example.

The biggest help in life.

The wind without is blowing fierce and cold,
31— The snow falls, and its drifts are piled apace;
And yet our Lamb is safe within the fold
Of our warm hearts, where is no vacant place,
For thou hast been our baby all these years!

Stillborn.

APRIL, Diamond, Innocence.

Both entering life upon one natal day,
(Red-lettered to us all) the one
1— Saw nothing but the diamond in her son,
Of the serenest ray—Bright April's gem,
Emblem of Innocence—The other
Saw in our grand, his grandest mother!

The Diamond ever reigns the Queen of gems;
2— Tho royal born, of homeliest elements.
A perfect jewel, yet without the sense
Of its great worth. So, too, with Innocence.
The genesis of the diamond.

Who picks his seed, to plant and till with care,
3— Need not depend on harvest for his yield.
Tho Nature, in her moods, may blast or blight,
She cannot undo what has been done right!
Good planting yields satisfaction.

The will of Justice lies in the first thought;
4— The act of Justice is that soonest done;
The aim of Justice is the right Intent;
The end of Justice is the just Event!
The means of Justice.

The old Patrician answered: "Happiness
5— I find in Misery. Where Duty led
I followed, and, in exile find an home
With Sorrow, happier than with Joy in Rome!"
The happiness of unhappiness.

6— Of all God-given powers the one that comes
Most near to the Divine is Influence.
Inflowing inertia.

Mother means so much of mothering
7— In ill times, as well as good.
Pain must alternate with Pleasure
As the price of Motherhood.
The price of motherhood.

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The price of motherhood.

While Innocence is easy simulated, as
8— The diamond, Time, skilled connoisseur, alone
Can tell the true from what false Art has made;
Truth gleams forever, Falsity must fade.

Simulated innocence.

"Does Anger ever work beneficence?"
9— Was asked a Sage, who questioned in reply,
"Think you a thunderstorm was ever meant
For other than a cause beneficent?"

The storms of Life.

For every flood, there is an ebb-tide;
For every storm there is a calm;
10— For every dark, there is a bright-side;
For every Ill there is some Balm.

Life's ebbs and flows.

Except the grain of corn die
There cannot rise the spray;
11— Except the grain of corn die
No bud will bloom in May;
Except the grain of corn die
No Resurrection Day!

Lenten Leaves.

"A woman's mood may break in tears,
12— A man's to anger tends;
In both, the cloud, storm, calm, then comes
The sunshine of amends!"

The wifely way.

There's no incentive like Uncertainty;
The fear of failure may be Life's chief spur.
13— While Pride may put forth to obtain the Crown,
Great Worth will rise for that it was cast down.

Incentive uncertainty.

All life fears storms, and yet Life ever lives
14— More circumspectly for the storms thus feared.

All life fears storms.

Why may not Man put questions? Nay,
15— Why should he not and yet be Man?
His asking proves not unbelief
In other lands, why in the Land of Grief?

Questioning.

I fought with beasts at Ephesus
When hosts were there to see.
16— A gruesome sight! Yet, ere it ceased,
Full nine and ninety cheered the Beast
To one who favored me!

Fighting with beasts at Ephesus.

Tho Truth delayed may come at last;
17— Still, my Soul, why need to wait?
Were it not better to run down the lane
And open for her the gate!

Meeting Truth partway.

18— God gives not man gifts,
He bestows on him talents.
A gift implies keeping, a talent—enlargement.

The organist of St. Marks.

He who strikes a true note,
19— He who hath a clear voice,
He whose life is innocent
He shall sing Life's new song!

Life's New Song.

Cornelia stood by
20— The while her sons were taught to live,
But she taught them how to die!

The Return of the Trophies.

She hungers with the one she cannot feed,
21— To wait outside with who cannot come in.
She suffers with Distress, meanwhile, she pleads
Guilty with those who are convinced of sin.

St. Sympathy.

"The hardest thing I know of, is
22— To wear a smiling face
To Life without, and yet within
To feel no smile of Grace."

The wifely way.

Three simple rules give Opportunity,
23— Do you what other men have left undone;
Say you what others think, but fear to say;
Pick up, to use, what others throw away!

Opportunity's tree rules.

"He wouldn't catch hold of the end we gave,
And he couldn't twig what we meant
24— When we offered him in-on-the-ground-floor, See?
No! he stared like an Innocent!

Nothing but a man of God.

Man's life is but an ever changing tide
Whose ebb and flow less on his Will depends,
25— Than strange attractions from the upper Skies,
Or nether Earth where Inclination lies.

The attraction of Inclination.

Hearts are not scales, or measures which
Official gaugers stamp or test.
26— My Sorrow's weight mayn't turn your scale,
Or may my measure for your Griefs avail.

The blessed Land of Grief.

Perfection perfected. Whose weight adds worth
In Geometric ratio, yet the least
27— Is as the most; whose tiniest bit detects,
As does the mass, the light which it reflects.

The Diamond.

If I should walk this way but once
28— I needs must mark my footsteps that I tread
No flower of Joy, and leave no print of Pain.
Aye, I may never pass this way again!

Life's careful walk.

A pious sacrifice cannot be lost.
29— Each elemental atom from the Skies,
To Earth returned, transmuted, here will shine
Supernal ever, as a gem divine!

The genesis of the diamond.

It is not the one who helps me most
To whom the most I owe,
30— But the one who does inspire me
To learn what I would know;
And with authority, doth bid
Me gird my loins, and go!

To whom Life owes most.

MAY, EMERALD, Happiness.

MAIA, fairest of the Sisters Seven,
All of Earth, yet born in Heaven;
1— Sent at Springtide Man to bless
With her gift of Happiness.
Symbolized by Emerald. Aye,
Life is happiest in May!

A woman's talk to Beauty drifts,
Her rare, God-given dower.
Whose end was, Beauty should be lit,
2— Not from without by Art,
But from the lamp of Love within
The chambers of the Heart!

The return of the trophies.

3— Mere feeling of Enjoyment one may stress
Beyond all tension, nor have Happiness.

Mere joy is not happiness.

Man may not be as happy as he would,
4— Or will he be as happy as he may;
While ever driving Happiness away
He wonders why she will not with him stay!

Lost happiness.

A kindly action can no more be vain
Than a clear sunray on a warm May day;
5— Altho dark clouds may pass before it, still,
It must give forth, its mission to fulfill.

No kind act is vain.

6— While too much stress on Action may be laid,
Too little of Intent is often made.

An happy intent.

Hers, sweet, sympathetic Motherhood
7— Showing Happiness, which clung
To every living thing which bears
A life, or broodeth young.

A sympathetic Motherhood.

Apollo's curls made him no more the god
8— Then Vulcan's lameness made him less divine.
Less, how one looks, or that his form attracts,
More, what he looks at, and how thinks, and acts.
The deformed lad

A good man cannot pass, and leave no part;
9— His righteous Life and Walk will yet fare on,
While good Example he must leave behind
To cheer, and to inspire his fellow-kind.
A good example cannot die.

Man rarely takes the Pleasures Life would give
10— At their full worth, but more than often strives,
By haggling values, to decrease their cost
To, in the end, find Happiness all lost.
Haggling Life's values.

Kind Commendation is Endeavor's sun;
11— The leaven of Life's meal; the temper which
Gives Effort cutting edge; the healing rain
Which to the dying grass gives life again.
Kind commendation.

One needs good eyes to see that which is good,
12— And must do nicely to observe nice work;
Thus, as one's sight is either dull or clear,
Unto Perception must all things appear.
Good seeing precedes good action.

Who falling, loses not Self-Confidence,
13— Gains more than he who doubting Self succeeds;
One has Self-Faith, the other one believes
He owes to Fortune, all that he receives.
No success in Self-Doubt.

"He trusted God, believed his fellow man;
14— Nor hated, envied not, and spake no ill.
Now blazon on our dead Knight's shield
An out-stretched Hand. God's will be done!"
The Knight of the helping hand.

An only daughter was her Father's pride;
His youngest, and the nearest to his heart.
15— An opening rose, between the red and white
The fearing florist fears may mar or blight.
His jewel finest, and his gem most rare
The goldsmith guards with the most jealous care.
An exacting Fatherhood.

I lift a brown hand to caress it,
16— And kiss its short-comings away,
As I think how it tried to assist me.
Why thought I not this thro the day?
The Parents' hour.

Why plant a wildbrier where a rose will grow,
17— Or leave to thistles land that will raise corn?
Why lead a small Life among large ones, and
Mere Pleasure seek with Happiness at hand?
Why live little?

Motherhood's as old as Life is,
18— Yet the newest Joy which Earth
Bears Humanity is Springtime,
Or a baby at its birth!
Baptism River.

Care carries a mortgage on every Heart,
19— And there is ever some empty bin.
Yet, what tho the rains pour outside of the door
So the eyes are kept dry within!
Unhappily worrying.

Bring all Life's Pleasures to fulfillment; then
20— Achieve its best Ambitions; Wishes gain;
Now add all these together in a sum,
Could one be happy, nought to overcome?
The happiness of overcoming.

21— No Pleasure to renounce or Joy resist,
Life's truest Happiness might all be missed!
The happiness of foregoing.

22— He gives but once who does bestow,
While he gives thrice who sweetly takes;
Thanks for the gift, and what it meant,
And, appreciation of the kind intent.

The art of nice receiving.

23— There are Perfections, and Perfections. While
Perfection, as an end, may not be reached,
Perfection as an Aim, with Self-Denial,
May constitute all but a perfect Trial.

Perfection.

24— Behind each Life there seems to be
Some great propulsive Force.
As ships pushed by inertia, so
Are Lives upon their course.

The inertia of goodness.

25— Who gave the most? Who had the least to give?
Who helped the most? Who had the greatest lack.
Who healed the most? Who suffered most of pain.
Who did for most? Who had the least again.
Thus in my vision, it was clearly shown
Who aided most their fellows to the Throne.

A vision of Helpfulness.

26— None can be wholly happy, yet impart
No Happiness to others; or have Heart
Without provoking large Kind-Heartedness;
Have Blessedness which others cannot bless;
Or have large loving that does not make rife
An happier, heartful and more blessed life.

Imparting happiness.

27— It is a test of Moral Bravery
To meet dire Disappointment without fear.

Moral bravery.

28— None sow wild oats; tho many reap, perforce
Their Self-sown Follies at the price of pain.

Reaping wild-oats.

There lies more doing in what one does do;
29— Belief in what he does believe in, than
In ten thousand things he vainly sets about,
Or, in a whole wide universe of Doubt!

Doing and believing.

What is so Immaterial as Thought,
30— Or yet so light as is a spoken Word?
And, still, all Nature may have no recourse
Against the either's all-impelling force!

Omnipotent vibration.

In life nought is material,
31— Save good Intent with kindly Act.
All other substance in a day
May wing itself to fly away.

Material immaterialities.

How happy he was ye may not know
31— Who have never let down Life's bars,
And given godspeed to a soul who has sought
To find his way to the Stars!

The way to the Stars.

JUNE, PEARL, Health.

Juno, Queen of Earth and Heaven,
Guardian-goddess of all good;
1— Patroness of all pertaining
Both to Maid and Motherhood.
Health, and length of days, her boon,
Pearl-jewelled, is her Month of June.

Of all good gifts Man's chiefest is good Health.
2— His pearl of greatest, and transcendent worth.
While other gems are crystalled, Pearls alone,
Like Healthfulness, are by accretion grown.
God's best gift is Health.

The kneeling at the Cross,
Pressed palms that supplicate;
3— The World without, the Christ within
Lord, help me imitate!
Christ Imitation.

Month of sunshine, song, and blossom,
4— Month of promise, opportune
For a month of Love, and loving,
Is the Lover's Month of June!
Happy June days.

Who looks to Wealth to ease him of Life's loads,
5— Or to relieve him of all cares, and cure its ills;
Or fence him from Life's Disappointments which
Cause Discontentments, has been never rich!
What Wealth cannot do.

"What has this type of beauty wrought for Greece?
6— This mindless face, this breast without an heart?
Nay, take it hence! The Mother in her home
Best typifies the Womanhood of Rome."
The Censor and the Venus.

7— A man may beg, or buy, or borrow wealth,
Or even steal it. He must earn Good Health!
Working for health.

"He is beside himself!" The World cries out
8— Of every man who strives to help his kind.
Of course he is and must be! Who does bide
Within himself goes out to none beside!"

Being beside one'self.

When so little goes a great ways, a great ways,
9— As we are so often told;
When a little goes so great ways, so great ways,
Then, why should we it withhold?

When a mite may lift a million.

The most Man's bitter Hatreds, Discontents,
And Jealousies grow from some trifling stings!
10— Yet, the fair Pearl is an accretion, too,
About an Irritation. Some good Hearts
Hide every Evil in a growth of Grace,
And each foul Grievance with a gem displace.

Gallnuts and pearls.

Patience, good People, Patience and Charity!
11— Long months are taken to produce a Pearl.
Long years of patience go to grow a tree,
God exercises Patience, should not we?

How trees are grown.

Oh yes, there are some things God cannot do!
12— He cannot undo what has been done wrong;
He cannot lift a fallen tear, or blot
From ill-behavior one unmanly spot.

Limited Omnipotence.

If half Man's ills are due to Ignorance,
13— (And this assumption be at least half true)
Then willful Ignorance must be held akin,
Or be itself considered as a sin.

Willful Ignorance.

14— She ground, dissolved, and drank her pearls, Mad Queen!
As some their Health. Small difference between!

Acts of madness.

A Fool once asked Autoritas, the Sage,
15— If Life was worth the living? Who replied,
"To one who puts such questions I can give
No reason why he should be asked to live!'

Life's Fool-question.

Each man of worth will one day wear his crown,
16— (Tho given to but a few to wear it twice)
Like June's, the very longest of the Year,
Whose aureole will all his Life ensphere!

Man's one crowning day.

Tho one gets lonesome who plays good alone,
17— Still, loneliness plays not good solitaire!
No, one is not lonely who can truly claim
Against himself, alone, he beats Life's game!

Playing moral solitaire.

As is his skin, so is the thought of Man;
Each has some raw spot where the nerve lies bare;
18— Apparent fact, or yet some hidden truth
He ever fingers like an acheing tooth.

Humanity's raw spots.

No one can say what he can do, or bear
19— Until Necessity comes up with him
To energize Endurance, or Endeavor, then
May come a Strength of which he had small ken!

The strength of necessity.

A Wiseman said, "I argue with no Fool,
20— For, when the wind blows dust I step aside.
And yet, I never let a doubting Youth
Feed at my table on an half-baked truth!"

Foolish argument.

What is so catching as an healthful laugh;
21— What so contagious as brave utterance;
What so infectious as a life well wrought,
What is God for if blessings are not caught!

All good is catching.

"What think you of the Shepherd?" Head bent down
22— The beast replied, "I'm nothing but a sheep,
And yet, I often yearn to know what he,
My Friend, Protector, Shepherd thinks of me?"

What Omnipotence thinks of Man.

One cannot keep his sitting and touch stars,
23— Or make smart sayings as he dives for pearls;
Most difficult Convention's skirts to hold
By one who mines for gems, or digs for gold.

Baiting eagles with pinhooks.

On all nights of the Year, save one, in dreams
The Souls of men again float down Life's stream
Revisiting the scenes of earlier Youth,
24— With Joy or Sorrow; but one night, forsooth,
The Church holds that the dreaming Soul
Seeks out the place where one day bell shall toll
Its final passing.

St. John's eve.

25— For, Nature, in herself, has not the power
From faulty bud to bloom a perfect flower.

Nature's limitations.

O! a cry speaks to a woman
26— In a language that does tell
All so little to the men-folk, busy,
As they come and go, and buy and sell.

Woman's opportunity.

What is, or will be, may not be the best,
27— Tho it be best to wisely use what is,
And leave it better, as one always may.

Making good of what is.

I had liefer be bitten than have no dog,
28— Betrayed, than to have no friend;
And rather endeavor, to fail of my aim,
Than no good to resolve, or intend!

Some preferences.

I loved thee, for thy heart was all inclined
To Tender Mercies. Thou was't good and kind.
29— I loved thee, for thou had'st so much, forsooth,
Of sweet Sincerity, such love for Truth.
I loved thee, for all other traits above,
Thy great capacity of Heart to love!

Sonnets to a Saint.

A fairy tale? A fairy once
30— Did promise all the girls
Who brot her most Unselfishness
A necklace of rare pearls.

The Year rolled round, when each one brot
Now, to the Fairy's ear
Her loving-work, save one poor child,
"What have you brot, my Dear?"

"I've brot a kiss to her who wins
The dear, good Fairy's pearls."
"Then give to her the necklace!" cried
Each one of all the girls.

The Pearl of Unselfishness.

JULY, RUBY, Love.

Color of the heart's best lifeblood;
Color of young Manhood's flush;
Color of a Day's new dawning;
1— Color of fair Maiden's blush.
Love's bright color, wooing, wed—
July's gem is Ruby, red.

Give but the Marriage day to Wisdom, and the State
2— May yield the rest to Folly and yet thrive.
Yet, of this day let Folly be possessed
Wisdom will fail tho she have all the rest!

The Marriage day.

Love is a light, a leaven, an atmosphere
3— Whose warmth makes bud to blossom wedded life.
But Love grown chill and cold, why then, alas!
Wedlock is soured, or falls a sodden mass!

Marital love.

The independence of a State consists
4— Less in mere phrasing of whate'er attends
The declaration of its oneness, more,
On what the Selfhood of the State depends.

Independence day.

All is natural with Nature;
But, than all things else beside,
5— Nothing seems so sweetly natural
In all nature as a Bride!

Bridal days.

All in Nature seems mysterious,
6— Still, in mysteries above
What is mystic is the mystery
Of reciprocal true Love!

Reciprocal affection.

7— Love multiplies itself, yet freely gives;
And giving, feeds the heart on which it lives.

Reciprocal love.

Her loss was nothing! but what was his?
8— So foolish, false, and fickle,
He had cast this mass of gold away
To marry a bit of nickle!

His loss.

The world seems very full of men, and yet
9— But three of these count much in most of lives;
The man one fears, or hates, or loves the best,
Save these, he can get on with all the rest.

Life's most impossible three.

Love beautifies the very homeliest face
10— To make it as an Angel's to appear.
So, one unselfish act may add such grace
As to both lift, and beautify the Race!

Transforming love.

I hunger so for loving food,
11— And yet, too often sate
My hungerings from off the dish
Whereon is served my hate!

Feeding on hate.

I often in despondency
Said in a fretful tone,
12— "I am so lonely!" But, ah me,
Until I saw one prone
Upon Love's grave I never knew
What it meant to say, "Alone!"

Life's true loneliness.

—Comes a time when Spring brings promise
13— To young lovers of Love new;
Stays the time that proves long loving,
To old Lovers, as love true!

Life at sixty.

14— God is good! Eternal hatred
Never has, or can prevail.

Not with a loving God.

15— Great lives, like maps, are drawn upon a scale,
Enlargement needs must be symmetrical.

Life's enlargements.

But the way of Art was a long way,
An hard path, and footsore
16— Who treads it must be. Yet, Life's Masters have
All trodden this way before!

The way of Art.

"Wifehood" is put in just one word,
17— Before, nor since the Fall
Has God said more, which was, "Helpmeet,"
Helpmeet, and this was all!"

The wifely way.

18— Tho mere respect may no Maid's love secure,
Without Respect mere love may not endure!

Self-Respect woos best.

Nay, but to him who knows no sterile plain;
Who plows to plant, and holds no labor vain:
19— Who never asks will there be rain, or sun?
But questions only is his work well done?
To such an one will God Himself disclose;
Whose "wilderness shall blossom as the rose!"

Good work.

The inauspicious moment, as men count,
20— Time often takes to bring his great events to pass.
So, happy he who with girt loins doth stand
With fixed Attention, and with ready Hand!

Await with readiness.

My Father called his Mother good;
His Children call her Grand—;
21— My Children call her Great—while theirs
Say "Great-great-good Grand mother, and
Great adds each Generation, so
Good Motherhood must wax and grow!

Mrs. John Mattocks.

22— All the World may love a Lover, yet
Than all the World above,
A Lover, in his loving, loves
With a world-full, but his Love!

Maid Mercy.

23— Strong men create the Worlds in which they live,
Life's weakest ones let others fashion theirs,
While all between, put up with, or content
Themselves to live with their Environment.

World creators.

24— Each strong, good man needs much of Helplessness,
To work upon, to make him fit and strong.
Benevolence, like other powers, at length,
Unexercised, is like to lose in strength.

Exercising one's Virtues.

25— True Excellence may not find ready sale,
Yet, soon or late, someone will come to buy.
What tho they do not, nay, and never should?
Who has it by, holds that much to the good!

Retained Excellence.

26— It is not the robe of satin or silk,
So fine, or as gossamer thin,
Which dresses Life best, Oh, no, my girl,
But the good Heart's wrappings within!

The sea snail.

27— Love is reciprocal. No annual roots
But that it leaves its little to the soil
In its decay, to pay for nourishment.
So, Loving-Kindness never can be spent.

Love must be reciprocal.

28— Who would reveal an hidden mystery
Must first prove it is not mysterious!
And this once proved, full easy then to reach
The minds of those one goes about to teach.

A wise Teacher.

The test of a man is less in his strength
29— When in fine condition, and strong.
More, when he is down, or up against odds,
And still he will not do wrong!

The best test of Manhood.

Altho availability be not
30— Always a Virtue, still, a virtue which
Is not available in time of need
Counts no more than a Vice without the deed!

Life's availabilities.

Up to Man's line of duty,
31— No further could he go;
Or from it did he ever swerve,
While he never fell below!

The Roman Soldier.

AUGUST, SARDONYX, Felicity.

But with the diamond's tooth, whose bite is hard,
Gnaw to the oynx base down thro the sard
1— (A single stone, and yet two-colored) lo,
In clear relief looks up the rare stone cameo.
So, based on Happiness, thro Self-denials, see;
The August face of fair Felicity!

"Let furrow, and each line, and angle show;
2— Mine was an harsh experience, let my Son
Know each line, with its cost, to understand
The Father's face he wears upon his hand!"

The cameo face.

When, lo, deep sunken on his shield,
3— And there inlaid with rarest art,
He read the legend long forgot,
"God healeth but with Heart-to-Heart."

The burning wound.

4— The fittest vantage ground by Man possessed
Is where Endeavor stands to do his best.

The advantage of endurance.

—Came a Youth to Carara. Ambition
5— Looked thro the clear blue of his eye,
As the Peaks of the marble Mountains,
Sun tipped, pierced the blue of the sky.

The challenge of Art.

Thro constant suffering the clear-cut face
6— Of Patience looked from hers. Who saw it, fain
Must needs felicitate an inborn Grace
Which from Self-loss could get such soulful Gain!

Patience exemplified.

It is unnatural to be satisfied,
7— All but unmanly to rest with Content.
Roused Energies, oft Restlessness, with Strife,
Dissatisfactions—All add Power to Life!

Endeavor's unrest.

What feeds, nor warms is of fictitious worth,
8— Save Excellence, whose price appreciates;
For this involves both Trial, Truth, and Time,
Three T's with which Right Effort needs must rhyme!

Life's three T's.

With First to have, why take at Second hand?
9— With power for Great things why put up with Small?
With large Desire, why should Life be content
With less Endeavor, and thereto consent!

Living Small among Large lives.

"I am the child of Circumstance myself,"
The Prince said, thinking that it sounded well.
10— Old Thrace wheeled quickly with an angry glance,
"Yet we are father of your Circumstance!"

By force of circumstance.

She thought but Truth. True as herself,
11— With Hope her Heart was rife.
Hers was the fullness of a large belief
In the Truthfulness of Life!

The hopeful Heart.

One's Self-Denials are the doors thro which
12— He enters on Life's rare Felicities,
Where little is worth having, save at price,
And purchase of some great Self-Sacrifice!

Life's felicities.

Too open he to hide a Thought.
13— Nor yet, could he disguise
Emotion, or could he conceal,
Persuade, or compromise!

Manlius Torquatus.

Work completed, then he slept.
14— Which is all my tale. A riddle?
No, but some folks tread Life's maze
Without keeping step to fiddle!

Results.

Happy the man who masters Circumstance,
Nor serves it as its creature, as bond slave;
15— Or bent thereby, but who himself may bend
The happenings of Life unto his end!

Mastering Circumstance.

Long years have passed. Still God is good!
Who has given to me enough;
16— And I yet am weaving behind the Town,
For the neighbors, my Kersey-Stuff.
Of which, they tell me it is all wool,
While each yard is more than full!

The weaver of Kersey-Stuff.

'Twas a great big thought which held him up,
17— While it filled his Soul with awe,
And the deeper his depths, so strange, so strange,
The clearer the Stars he saw!

Finding his way to the Stars.

How may I recompense the help,
Great debt I owe to you?
18— "You owe me nothing, but to those
Who need a Friend, God only knows
How much a Man may do!"

Pass it along!

Griefland, at first view, seems a vale
19— Of deepest shadows. When, a ray,
And then a radiance floods with light
To show the Vale of Grief may be an height!

The blessed Land of Grief.

Who fain would rear a son to usefulness,
20— Or daughter of rare parts, and womanly,
Should bear in mind the natural law, perforce,
A stream can rise no higher than its source!

Example the best parent.

21— Their children are the parents of wise men.

Some good men moan their lives of uselessness!
22— As if God made a man of no account
In His own image, or that He could make
Of Human Nature, a divine mistake!
No good can be useless.

One said, "For such a trifling loss
23— Why need it so appall?"
Until he was appalled to learn
That this little was his all!
Tho little, his all.

Perpetual Motion, Airships and the Poles
24— Form but a trinity of great ideas
Which matters less be they not all achieved,
Than if by stout Hearts they have been believed!
Life's large ideas.

Life is felicitous to him alone
25— Who lives his Love, to love Life as he lives;
Nor shirks its shove, or seeks the World's caress,
Who hugs not, but imparts his Happiness.
Whom Life felicitates.

We all, dear, sweet Evangel, are thy priests
26— Ordained by laying on of Christ's own hands.
Our Parish is the Fireside, and the Home,
Or, where'er men faint, and weary grow.
The evangel of Help.

The beauties of a Life do e'er attract;
27— The sweets of Life come ever from kind act;
The harmonies of Life always inspire
The actions of a Life to something higher!
Life is worth living!

Health, Light, Love with Aspiration;
28— Given these, one may endure
All the frowns of evil Fortune
Yet, at sixty, not be poor!
Life at sixty.

Full content, with Disappointment,
29— Miserably happy! And
With no real fears, yet scareing
At mere footprints in Life's sand!

Baptism River.

The Wiseman said: "A nice observance gives
30— A just conception, and, what thus conceived,
In mind or body, must bring forth, indeed,
By birthright, living of superior breed!

Nice punctiliousness.

—When, I heard a loud burst, a glad chorus of song—
And then I beheld a bright Angelic throng—
31— As balmy as Springtime the air—
Now I learned, as I looked, Death to some was as night—
While to others a bright morning pathway of light
Leading upward from Vanity Fair!

A vision of Life.

SEPTEMBER, SAPPHIRE, Wisdom.

A crystal based like common clay,
The Sapphire, of cerulean blue,
1— Yet clear as a September's day,
Its gem. The Month of fruitage; too,
It symbols Wisdom. Therefore, who are wise,
Tho grown from Earth, are fruited from the Skies!

I prayed Thee to pull down where I upreared,
Should I build wrong. Did I to Folly fill,
2— Or of Presumption, or with Pride, Life's cup,
I prayed Thee, Lord, its contents all to spill.
Now, what I have of Manhood, or of Grain,
I had it rising from a bed of Pain!

The prayer of Wisdom.

3— Who would have "Wiseman" carved upon his tomb
Must live his life in being called a Fool!

The price of epitaphs.

"Where shall I find thee in my time of need?"
Asked Mind of Wisdom. Who made this reply.
4— "Your need will be where Folly does abound,
Face thou from it, lo, there will I be found!"

Where to find Wisdom.

One called a Wiseman, "Master." When he smiled,
5— "I cannot make your bread, yet may, at least,
With homely maxims, mix you rising yeast!"

Mixing maxims for yeast.

Intensest feeling lacks expression most:
A quick brain oft is slowest in its speech.
6— "The gift of tongues" prates Knowledge in his school
Where tongue-tied Wisdom stutters like a fool!

Tongue-tied Wisdom.

My Father! to my Soul new life he brought,
7— My Brother! for together had we wrought;
Our Teacher! whose example Wisdom taught.

Father St. Jean.

8— The flush, with sweat, shows the red blood of Brawn,
While Fibre comes at cost of Effort spent.
And Strength from Burden-bearing. Thought to seam,
Or channel brow shows a great depth of stream!

What shapes Manhood.

9— Man would stride firmer did he fear no slip,
And might climb higher, not afraid to fall.
Rash, dauntless Folly oftentimes attains
What cautious Wisdom strives for with great pains!

Preventive Fear.

10— "A boon I pray thee! Hold thy glass,
Lest, with its sands, my Beauty pass."
"Nay, hold thy Cheer, thy Faith, kind Heart
And from thee Beauty cannot part,
But add perfection to thy Prime."
She smiled, "God helping—Father Time!"

How Beauty holds her own.

11— To this wise man, each victory of his Soul
Was a departure, not its final goal.

Father St. Jean.

12— Wise men carefully develope
What Life's wiser hold as best;
While his wisest drop but Seedthoughts
Wisdom only to suggest.

Life at sixty.

13— Why birthday maxims? Nothing but a task
For those to work at who such questions ask!

Birthday maxims.

14— A Friend, of all my other friends, my best!
A Friend, of all my Friendship full possessed:
Friend of my Joy and Sorrow, Health and Pain,
Friend in my Losses more than in my Gain.
Dear Friend, on thee I did the most depend,
Whose friendly Life did mine the most befriend!

Sonnets to a Saint.

15— Wisdom, most wise, is often ignorant;
Yet Ignorance is at his wisest, when
He will not hire Experience at the price
Of winning knowledge at the cost of Vice!

When Ignorance is wise.

16— Tomorrow we may wisely ask;
Tomorrow we may listen. Wait!
Tomorrow we may learn to walk God's way;
Tomorrow, Lord, Forgive our blind Today!

The blessed Land of Grief.

17— Ten thousand things a man may know,
To learn ten thousand more,
And then not know one tenth as much
As he thought he knew before!

Something worth knowing.

18— In life, is nought so old as Wisdom, or
Is there so new in Life, as something wise.
Still, few know Wisdom when they see her, and
Still fewer can her teachings understand!

Unrecognized Wisdom.

19— A Wiseman said, "When once a fool will learn
My weathers and my language, and, despite
The first will hear the second; then, in my school
I can learn from, and teach that sort of fool!

A wise man's moods.

20— Wisdom must stand, when Knowledge ever sits;
Crass Pedantry reclines; weak Folly needs must lean,
While Ignorance sprawls prone! So much depends
On Mind's position to attain her ends.

The attitude of the mind.

21— A kindly Simple softly stroked its ears
To gain the liking of a vicious mule;
Which, nodding, said, "Poor simple fool alas!
And yet he knows the wise end of an ass!"

A fool's Wisdom.

Hence, in mind interpretation,
22— Who with Life makes least mistakes
Is whose point of view is largest,
And the most allowance makes.

Life at sixty.

Life has no depth, or falling lower than from
Man's faith in God, Himself, and Fellow kind,
23— Or hath it heights, or rising higher than
The hopeful helping of his fellow Man!

Faith's trinity.

How long should Wisdom sleep? A Sage was asked,
24— Who figured on his tablet, and replied,
"Wisdom in sleep, as many hours may take,
Year in and out, as Folly spends awake."

That question of sleep.

Most seek for Wisdom, yet turn when she comes;
25— They coax her to receive her with a frown.
And then to wonder, with a fool's surprise,
Just why it is that so few men are wise!

Coaxing Wisdom with a frown.

A Dacian frog, the wisest of his time,
26— When asked the secret of his wise old age?
Said, "Father taught me I should never try
To jump beyond the most convenient fly!"

The wise frog of Dacia.

The pioneer of Wisdom is the fool;
27— So Falsehood goes before the coming Truth
The gyves, the lash of cruel tyranny
Do most conduce to set slaved People free.

Worth considering.

In his age God said, "Come down and die!"
28— When he cried out from his steeple,
"Where art thou, Lord?" And the Lord replied,
"Down here among my People!"

The Parish Priest of Austerite.

Perfect days may come in June
29— But the splendid ones, remember,
Days of purple, days of gold,
Come by waiting till September!

September days.

They'd hitched their wagon to a star
30— (By Emerson's advice) and tarried
Till (Lowell's) perfect day in June
When cultured lovers do get married.

Meanwhile they transcendentalized—
Till, on that perfect day in June,
The bank suspended payment, and
Left them without a pickayune!

"Noblesse oblige, we'll wait!"
In her upright script, which pleased him—
"Don't write downwards!" Then she Catoed,
Platoed, and Euripidesed him!

Oh! these wagons to the stars,
Aren't they long in getting started?
Three years, six years, nine years, twelve years!
Since this cultured pair were parted.

So, at length, uprose their star,
Lo! that wagon where they'd hitched it
Now was their triumphal car,
And the tune as first they pitched it.

Now they sang as they rode 'round
Nodding to their rich relations;
Visiting the Nobs and Dons
In Life's higher Constellations!

September days.

OCTOBER, OPAL, Hope.

As the October skies seem to ensphere,
In one, the several months of all the Year;
1— As, in its gem, the Opal, do we find,
In one, the glamor—sheen of all combined;
So, too, each Virtue, and each Grace finds scope
Within the Gift of opalescent Hope.

Of all the potent factors of Success
Grim Perseverence holds the chiefest place,
2— Without which large Ability may grope,
While with it fixed Endeavor must have Hope.
Hope goes with Perseverence.

The Heights of Hope the Lord God raised
That all Mankind might share
3— Their beautiful scope with Him, while Man,
With Doubt, digged the Depths of Despair.
The Ancient City of Man.

Life might be happy, if Man did not fear
From bitter Disappointment further on;
4— And might be miserable, with Doubt to mope
Among its shadows, were it not for Hope.
What Life might be.

In vain horizon of Man's hopes to reach
While each height climbed but gives him further view.
5— In chief attainments he sees little gained,
As each one had, sees others unattained.
Endeavor's Horizon.

There is one instinct, and one only, which
Transcends all Reason, in one Grace unites
6— God, Man, and Creatures as no Reason could,
Maternal Instinct, known as "Motherhood."
The maternal instinct.

But few of Man's attainments are attained
7— As he had hoped for. Still, worth-while, was gained!
Ten ways to Attain.

An habitation with a Character;
8— A structure not yet old, but were you told
"Their Fathers built it," you must needs reply,
"It looks as if had by Inheritance."

The building of Character.

A disappointment sours a little Soul.
9— Or shrivels, to embitter, most its fruit:
Large Hearts it sweetens. Effort it upstirs.
Frees Manly traits, as frost, ripe nuts from burrs.

Ennobling disappointment.

"I takes a turn, to feel the rope
10— Which stiffens, while it gives me hope.
To feel I'm lashed agin the wheel,
Tight lashed agin her wheel."

The Ship of Life.

For fear of hawks it hid itself by day,
11— Afraid of owls its heart beat fast all night.
Yet neither came. Poor bird, whose fearing cost
The song, and pleasure of its Summer lost!

The fearing lark.

There is no Mentor like true Self-Respect,
12— Which cannot be deceived tho one try hard.
A man may bind his Conscience; Self-Respect,
Despite ill usage, fain would stand erect.

An erect Self Respect.

Contentment at sun-rising is a Vice,
13— Tho it be virtuous with the sun gone down;
One should not stake much on it in a race,
While in defeat 'tis altogether base!

A vicious content.

His hands were clean, his life was pure.
14— He dressed in homespun cloth
To serve his Country, and his gods,
While he never broke his oath!

The Roman soldier.

15— There never dwelt in tenement of Man
A Soul so small it could not be enlarged,
To yet grow larger, when it once was backed
By some big-brother-soul's heroic act!

How Souls are enlarged.

16— Born at one birth, and suckled at one breast,
Where goes the one, the other is addressed.
. . . . Again, at midnight, as Hope walked alone
From out Life's darkness, now she heard a moan
Faith's feeble cry "I do believe! yet grope"
Quick flashed a ray from his sweet sister Hope.

Hope lighting Faith.

17— There is no honest Purpose comes to nought,
Or Effort had without good left behind.

Honest Effort.

18— —Comes a day when early Springtime
Blossoms with her first-blown rose.
—Comes a day in later Autumn
When his last, and best one blows!

Life at sixty.

19— For want of right Perspective, Life at times
Looks ill, things seem awry, and all displaced,
Relations disproportionate, untrue
All from not choosing its right point of view.

Life's point of view.

20— There is a great responsibility
Attached to wearing an illustrious name.

A good name means much.

21— The old man, waiting, saw a wondrous sight;
His locks, and flowing beard, were now snow-white!
The Ancient bowed with joy. The gods said, "Nay,
Hold up your head that all men bow to you,
To say, with Truth, when your white locks they scan,
'This, the gods' latest, yet best gift to Man'!"

Ebenezer Brewer.

Aye, sad, alas! yet no less true,
22— From the sun-tipped Heights of Hope
Descent is had to the Depths of Despair
By the way of Despondency Slope.

The ancient City of Man.

Today is plastic, may be moulded, shaped;
23— While Yesterday is fixed, Tomorrow void.
For ills once passed, too late for Life to cope,
For Future good one can plan for, with Hope.

The plastic present.

When is Man's wisdom ripe? One asked a Sage,
24— Who touched his radish to the salt, and said,
"Eight days ago this was not large enough,
In eight days more it will be stringy, tough!"

Ripening Wisdom.

Of Life's past ills, or pleasures yet to come:
25— Of all old Disappointments, or new Hopes;
Of all Mankind, this truth must stand confessed,
Not what we hope for, but what is, is best!

Life's vain hopes.

Warm-Heartedness, Oh Christian Women,
26— Is more needed than much art
In doing! If not heal Life's paining,
You may lessen, somewhat, its sore burning smart!

Woman's Opportunity.

Some fruits do ripen early, others late,
27— (Tho none may ripen twice) then comes decay.
As for Life's best achievements, few careers
Strike twelve on either side of fifty years!

Few excel both sides of fifty.

A sleepy Crane once asked an Eagle why
28— He had such awful talons, beak, and will?
Who made reply, "We eagles do not beg,
Or hope for Luck, while standing on one leg!"

The Eagle and the Crane.

29— Who seeks Prosperity two purses needs,
The one to speed, and one to fetch him back;
For most men in their searchings for her find
What they thought was before, they left behind.

Coming back to Prosperity.

30— Without the hopes of Heaven, Man might be good,
For very good's sake, which is good enough.
And yet, to make most men do fairly well
They needs must have a lively fear of Hell!

Fear as a factor.

31— A scholar came next, and his head was bent low
While his thin hands were crossed on his breast.
"Sir! what have you learned in your studies today?"
"I have learned that Life's least was its best;
To unlearn what I learned, most my teachers were wrong,
I have learned to unlearn—" and he hurried along,
"Most they taught me in Vanity Fair!"

A Vision of Life.

NOVEMBER, TOPAZ, Fidelity.

November Nature spreads for man and beast
Her largess at its largest, as she throws an haze
1— Of Indian Summer at her annual feast,
To which all come with thankfulness to praise
The God of Nature; in whose diadem,
Type of fidelity, shines Topaz as her gem.

Who seeks Fidelity need not go far,
2— Or would be led by her, may gird his loins
Upon the instant: to demur, or wait
For questioning, alas! may make him late.

Questioning Fidelity.

Of all things binding is Manhood's Freewill.
3— Nor ever he so free as when fast bound
By thongs of stern Fidelity to Right
Whose lash each dereliction will requite.

Bound by Freewill.

Temptation rarely follows but when led;
4— And seldom comes until it has been called.
Toying Temptation, fondling low Desires,
Is blowing up, not blowing out Sin's fires!

Leading Temptation.

A word may uplift, or a word may depress one;
5— Words lead to action, while great men are stirred,
Life's lesser, and weaker ones often are sodden
For the uprising leaven contained in one word.

Word leaven.

He dwelt so much on a righteous death
6— That his preachments often led one
To believe God cared far less, indeed,
For a live man than a dead one!

The parish Priest of Austerite.

7— A long straight line when it begins to bend
Is but a crooked line with one straight end!

A crooked life.

To lead a pious life while playing knave,
8— To be religious with no reasoning sense;
Or creed one's self on foolish credence, can
Commend itself to neither God nor Man.

Mere faith is not Fidelity.

The test of Manhood is to weight it down
9— With obligations, balancing the scales;
Then, if it turn, with but an hair, we see
The perfect niceness of Fidelity.

How nice scales are tested.

They there, turned loose on me such beasts
As hurts me to but name;
10— What tho I put them all to rout,
So vile they were! to think about
I hang my head with shame!

Fighting with beasts at Ephesus.

"Of twelve Temptations I have had today,
11— Two came at call, and by permission two;
One forced itself, and one was on me pressed,
While two I fled, I followed all the rest!"

An Honest Confession.

Oh! the freezing blasts which blow
On poor Human Nature naked;
12— Oh! the noxious weeds that grow
In the fields of Man's Fidelity
How little do we know!

Sergeant Grey.

The World is not so rich, Young Man, or strong,
13— That it can buy, or bind you with its thong,
The World can't make, or mar a man with wrong!

The World's limitations.

14— Mere good-enough is good-for-nothing, and
Who builds on it, but edifices on sand.

Little good in good enough.

There is a Faith which is no more than Fear;
15— There is right Doing that will lay all Doubt.
There is a Trust in Providence; and, too,
There is crass Folly which can Faith undo!

Folly may undo Faith.

If half Life's Wrongs are done to set it Right,
16— And half its Good to undo some past Wrong;
It is not just too closely Motive ask,
Or fair to put Intention to the task.

Questioning Motive or Intent.

Ye Souls who walk Life's battlements
Pray tell us what ye see,
17— For that ye walk uprightly,
Is it nearer God ye be?

Sergeant Grey.

A Mind which follows Aspiration fain
Must leave behind a lot of worldly truck;
18— So he who sails the Seas new Worlds to find
Must leave a lot of paying freight behind.

Aspiration cannot be hired.

Age may wear a face of sunshine
In Life's chill November; must!
19— Be the frowns of Living fronted
With a Providential trust.

Life at sixty.

For she loomed big, where others looked small;
Was strong, where others seemed weak.
20— Thus she held her own till she came to go,
And then; God rest her soul!
If twenty big men fell into her grave
It wouldn't half fill the hole!

Her large life.

Of Gifts, in giving, that which highest ranks
21— Is Gratitude, the Grace of giving thanks.

Thanksgiving as a Gift.

Upon Life's hilltops we may see
With clearer eye
22— Where in its lower valleys most
Our sweet possessions lie!

Life's nearer blessings.

Her's was a Motherhood, so large, it threw
Her mothering mantle over all, nor knew
23— Between her own and others, save but in degree,
To every Child-need she proved motherly.

The Mantle of Motherhood.

Who lays a plate at his Thanksgiving feast,
And giveth thanks for nothing but his own,
24— To make none others thankful but himself;
His thankfulness will hardly reach the Throne!

Thanksgiving.

Where nine men plan, scarce one will carry out;
Where nine men carry out, but one completes;
25— Where nine men reach completion, hardly one
Will add Perfection to a work well done.

Accomplished finishing.

There is no keener happiness in life
Than satisfaction with Accomplishment,
26— Which, always does, and ever will attend
On full attainment of some worthy end.

Accomplishment.

And who bade us to rate
Necessity? What did the Master teach?
27— He taught us, to the Poor, we were to give.
How rarely did He deal in adjective!

If God gave but to Worthiness.

Sat the parish Church of Austerite,
With Dives, at Christ's table,
28— With no seat for Him who was giving thanks,
With Lazarus, in the stable!

In the parish church of Austerite.

NOVEMBER, TOPAZ, Fidelity.

As her little blue hands were clutching the shawl,
While the wind blew cold and strong;
I could not help wishing, as you have wished
29— So often, good People all,
That Poverty's parcels need not to be wrapped
In packages quite so small!

Poverty parcels.

Say! where did you come from, cold Northwind?
"I have come from o'er City and moor
30— Right past the houses of they who were rich
And into the homes of the poor."

And what did you hear while passing, Northwind?
"The rich Mother say, 'To be sure,'
As she gave hers an hug, 'We are all warm and snug.'
But a sigh from the Mothers of poor."

And what did you see on your travels, Northwind?
"I saw the rich people procure
Their bins full of coal against all their needs,
And the empty sheds of the poor."

And what did you say on your way, Northwind?
"I whispered the rich folks, 'S-e-c-u-r-e!'
Thro their closed fast doors, but rattled, and hurled
Thro the cracks of the poor, 'E-n-d-u-r-e'!"

And what did you do, as you blew, Northwind,
And blustered o'er City and moor?
"I hope that I touched some rich folks' hearts,
But am sure that I frightened the poor!"

DECEMBER, TURQUOISE, Success.

Save one, no gem is of intrinsic worth;
No more are Months but as each does attend,
One on the other, to some fruitful end.
1— So, too, each Grace and Virtue must give birth
To others, Life to fructify and bless
And, like December's gem, the Turquoise,
Type the Year's success!

Defeat makes more successful than Success;
2— The wise owe most to their own ignorance.
Worth, once fallen, has begun to rise;
When Wit knows nothing, she is halfway wise!
The genesis of Success.

One foot before the other falling marks
3— Progression forward. First the fallen seed;
Then falling husk precedes the downward root,
Then, falling flower, when, lo, the falling fruit!
Rise comes by falling.

Why not hold growth as something won?
4— There lies perfection in the shoot,
As marked as in the bud, the flower, or fruit.
Growth as a success.

Most men are quick to ask the reason, why?
5— While more are slow to reason out the, how?
The first could tell them why they failed in deed,
The second might tell them how to best succeed!
Effort's whys and hows.

Life means to do, surmount, and overcome.
6— And who does most of this makes most of Life.
Who fails nine times, then one success, may boast
Of having helped nine tenths of his kind the most!
Life lies in overcoming.

7— Life's large achievements are consecutive,
Each one an output of the one before.
Consecutive growth.

DECEMBER, TURQUOISE, Success.

When December, naughty neighbor,
8— Shot his love-ray, Nature, nice,
In her wifely wisdom, coyly
Caught it on a shield of ice!

December love.

Wealth may be gained, or yet be lost, by Chance!
9— Not so the steady gain of Mind and Heart;
This comes by growth sustained, consecutive
Which Perseverance, in the end, does give.

Sustained growth.

A worthy artist, trembling, does serve
10— A Jealous mistress between Hope and Fear;
To doubt her smiles, while he believes her frown;
One lifts him little, while one casts him down.

Distrusting Attainment.

Could we see others as we see ourselves,
11— And heft their burdens, as we lift our own;
We might show more forbearance, while we must
In all our judgments be more justly Just.

The basis of just judgment.

It is less burdens, more ill-balanced cares
12— Which chafe so with their shifting, Life so wear;
One can bear easier added self-denial,
Or two Cares, steadier, than one petty trial.

More weight, steadier gait.

One stumbles on full more than he attains;
13— While every beggar has his lucky-day;
So, happy he who well conserves such day,
To make the most of that thrown in his way!

Why Fortune is blind.

"We know our weakness, let us learn our strength!
14— My Brother's brow is false-crowned, mine is bare;
My non-success means gristle, brawn and bone!"
The next campaign won the Usurper's throne.

The Realm of Non-Success.

A Life, in passing, said to Death, "Strike quick!
15— Why do you linger, while I am in haste?"
"What do you mean?" asked Death, "Your work is done."
"Nay, nay! my life-work is but just begun!"

Death begins some work.

While great success oft comes by hanging on
16— With grim determination, and brute force:
As often, does successful Effort show
It was achieved, by wisely letting go!

Successful letting go.

Mere Excellence is but a starting point,
17— To breathe, push back the hair, regird the loins
And, get into position for a better run
For something better than has yet been done!

Success as a starting point.

"Which has most grace of all thy gracious Three,
Or Gifts the greatest in thy hour of need;
18— Strong Fortitude, good Patience, or sweet Sympathy?"
Was asked of Suffering. When she sighing said,
"My sisters are so much, so very much to me
I think of them as one, and not as three!"

The divine Sisterhood.

No man correctly of his life may judge,
19— Or rightly estimate his handiwork;
For that his every action, with a change of mood,
Assumes before him a new attitude.

No man can judge of his own life.

20— A voice which speaks at times to every Soul,
"Outdo your fellows, and yourself excel!"

The Voice of Excellence.

How help the World? Help it by living;
21— Teach it truth by being true.
Stoop not that you may uplift men,
Stand! when they will rise to you.

Songs of Help.

One asked an old man what he thought of Age.
22— "Of Age as Age, I rarely ever think.
Of Wisdom's age I can with profit learn,
While Folly's age gives me but small concern!"

Thoughts of Age.

Once Death stood hitherside his goal, when Life
23— Now warned him off. "You scare the runners!" "Nay,"
Death made reply, "I may the timid scare,
While brave men I incite the more to dare!"

Death as an incentive.

"Defeat bears brotherhood of Aim and End;
24— Success breeds Isolation and Distrust.
Who rides in triumph, adulation drinks,
Who walks in chains, holds down his head, and thinks!"

The Realm of Non-Success.

If we should live unselfishly, and help,
Show kindness, and forbear, each morn
25— Would usher in for us a Christmas Day.
To bring to us a Christ new-born.
And, seeking not to rise, but lift,
Each opportunity would prove a gift.

Christmas.

While bitter Disappointment often goes
26— With sore Defeat, full more of bitterness,
With Disappointment, just as often owes
Both call, and coming to a great Success!

The disappointment of Success.

Each lad has the great gift of prophecy.
27— He knows astrologies, interprets dreams,
Providing they are fashioned of the stuff
A Youth's dream should be made of, sand and grit!

The Soap Baron's secret.

28— Who never saw their parents give,
With Selfishness are like to live.

Parental selfishness.

Who can see Justice at a single glance
29— Has not to look again to act thereon;
But, at first look, who sees her not aright
Will scarce discern her with a second sight.

Instinctive Justice.

Who looks back on the last days of the Year
30— With large composure, and with small regret
Is not the one to greet the coming Year
As if from it he nothing had to fear.

The old and new Years.

"Year to some I proved of Sorrow,
Soon their sorrows will be o'er;
31— Year to others I brought Pleasure,
Soon their joys will be no more."
Said the old Year who lay passing,
With the new Year at the door.

L. Envoi.

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